

## WHAT WE CLAIM IS

- 5 1. A clear, high oil loaded, thermodynamically stable oil-in-water microemulsion comprising :
- a) at least 30% of oil ;
  - b) from 1 to 30% of a surfactant system having a hydrophilic lipophilic balance, HLB, comprised between 9 and 18 ;
  - c) less than 20% of co-solvent ; and
  - 10 d) at least 30% of water.
2. A microemulsion according to claim 1, wherein the weight ratio between the surfactant system and the co-solvent is of 1 to 1.
- 15 3. A microemulsion according to claim 1, wherein the oil phase comprises an oil-soluble antioxidant.
- 20 4. A microemulsion according to claim 3, wherein the oil-soluble antioxidant is tocopherol.
5. A microemulsion according to claim 1, wherein the oil is selected from the group consisting of lemon, berry, lime, orange, grapefruit, tangerine, mandarin, kumquat and bergamot oil, and any mixture thereof.
- 25 6. A microemulsion according to claim 1, wherein the surfactant system comprises at least one surfactant selected from the group consisting of Tween<sup>®</sup> 20, Tween<sup>®</sup> 40, Tween<sup>®</sup> 60, Tween<sup>®</sup> 80, Glycosperse<sup>®</sup> L-20, Glycosperse<sup>®</sup> O-20, Glycosperse<sup>®</sup> S-20, Polyaldo<sup>®</sup> 10-1-O K, Polyaldo<sup>®</sup> 10-2-O K, Glycosperse<sup>®</sup> TS-20, Lonzest<sup>®</sup> SMO-20, Span<sup>®</sup> 20 and Span<sup>®</sup> 40.

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7. A microemulsion according to claim 1, wherein the co-solvent is an alcohol selected from the group consisting of propylene glycol, ethanol, mono- and disaccharide sugars and sugar alcohols.
- 5 8. A microemulsion according to claim 7, wherein the sugar alcohol is selected from the group consisting of sorbitol, xylitol and mannitol.
9. A microemulsion according to claim 7, wherein the alcohol is propylene glycol.
- 10 10. A microemulsion according to claim 1, wherein the surfactant system has a lipophilic hydrophilic balance comprised between 12 and 15.
11. A clear beverage comprising a microemulsion according to claim 1.
- 15 12. A clear beverage according to claim 11, comprising an antioxidant.
13. A method for imparting, improving, enhancing or modifying the organoleptic properties of a flavoring composition or a flavored product, wherein a microemulsion according to claim 1 is added to said composition or product as a flavor carrier.
- 20 14. A method according to claim 13, wherein the flavored product is a clear beverage.
15. A process for the preparation of a microemulsion according to claim 1, comprising the steps of
- 25 a) preparing a continuous phase consisting of water and co-solvent ;  
b) adding a primary surfactant to get a clear surfactant/water phase dispersion ;  
c) adding an oil phase, to form a milky dispersion ;  
d) titrating said dispersion with a co-surfactant to convert it into a clear
- 30 microemulsion.